

THE WEBSTER-RANDOLPH SCENIC RAILROAD

A publication dedicated to the establishment of the world's longest scenic railroad.

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NUMBER 3

JANUARY 8, 1971

WEBSTER SPRINGS, W. VA.

Steam Returns To Webster Springs

by G. Leroy Crislip

The train will run! These words seem almost too impossible to be true, but after all the months of planning and working, the scenic railroad team, led by D. P. "Sheriff" Given, has managed to arrange two railroad excursions on May 1 and 2 originating in Webster Springs.

Cass Scenic Railroad equipment, led by one of the Shays or the Heislors, will arrive in Webster Springs during the afternoon of April 29, 1971, after completing a 128-mile journey over the C&O and Western Maryland. On May 1, what can unofficially be called "the first trip of the scenic railroad," will be made.

Plans call for the train to depart Webster Springs at 8:00 a.m. and travel up Elk River on the Western Maryland Railroad to Bergoo where a photo run will be made across the trestle at the lower end of town. Near this point is the site of a former sawmill owned by the Pardee & Curtin Lumber Company in the older days of logging. Also nearby is the former shop build-

July 16, 1970 flood, the train will travel over the grade of the former Greenbrier, Cheat & Elk Railroad, which at one time extended from Cass in Pocahontas County to the headwaters of Leatherwood Creek up in the valley from Bergoo. Here the hills once resounded with the music of the steam locomotives -- first the Shays of the G. C. & E., next the narrow gauge Shays of Pardee & Curtin, and then the Consolidations and other types of the Western Maryland. The railfans will be travelling through a land truly rich in railroad lore. If the traveller looks high upon the mountain to his left while moving out of the town, he may be able to see the grade used by the Pardee & Curtin trains.

Soon the train will arrive at what is known locally as Number Four, a former coal mining area which kept the trains of the Western Maryland busy for many years. A short distance further on, the train will stop at scenic Whittaker Falls. Photographers will be certain to want to take many photos of this scenic area along Elk River before journeying onward to the

make for an interesting scene. One large exposed section of the bedrock in this area was for many years the popular site for dances and celebrations.

Shortly the train will come to Laurel Bank or Slaty Fork as it is locally known. This point 31.3 miles from Webster Springs will be the turning around place for the trip, and the passengers will have a chance to get something to eat. The Western Maryland boarding house can be seen within the wye. Here in days gone by helper locomotives and crews were on hand to assist the heavy coal drags coming up Elk River to challenge "the hill."

With lunch over, the train will travel slowly but steadily back down Elk River to Webster Springs. Scenes missed on the morning journey can now be viewed, and the wise traveller will no doubt move to the opposite side of the car from which he rode earlier to see the "second half" of this very scenic land. All good things come to an end, and this must be true with the railroad excursion. The train will pull into Webster Springs



remains of the Elkins & Carbon
are visible.
Looking down the side of the

only during periods of heavy rain-
fall. The many angular boulders
resting on the exposed bedrock

a distance of 62.6 miles through a
land rich with the memories of the
railroads of yesterday.

The Plan Of The Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad

By G. Leroy Crislip

The Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad will include that part of the Western Maryland Railroad, including sidings, from Elkins, Randolph County, West Virginia, to Elk River Junction, 20.8 miles distant, continuing on to Cheat River Junction, 1.6 miles further; and then following Shaver's Fork of Cheat River for a distance of 36.9 miles to the East end of Spruce, a town, but at present unmarked and officially recognized only in the Western Maryland Timetable.)

At a point approximately 0.25 mile further, the Western Maryland Railroad will connect with the Cass Scenic Railroad (owned by the State of West Virginia and operated by the Department of Natural Resources as a state park) which presently is located 1.2 miles to the south at which point it passes through the site of Old Spruce. Between Spruce and Old Spruce, 1.2 miles of track need be laid over the existing grade of the former Greenbrier, Cheat & Elk Railroad presently situated on land owned by the Mower Lumber Company. The plan requires that the State of West Virginia either purchase or lease the right-of-way and finance the construction of the connecting railroad.

From Spruce the railroad will continue westward to the summit of the grade (4,066.6 feet) at the Big Cut, dug mainly by hand in 1930, and then descend to Mt.

Airy, 6.9 miles from the East end of Spruce. It will then continue onward 8.3 miles to Laurel Bank (known locally as Slaty Fork); follow Elk River to Bergoo, Webster County, West Virginia, 20.4 miles distant; and then continue 11 miles to Webster Springs, Webster County, West Virginia.

The total length of the Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad including all of the Cass Scenic Railroad, the 1.2 miles of connecting track, and the Western Maryland Railroad from Elkins to the End of the tracks on the Back Fork of Elk River at Webster Springs is 119.4 miles. The right to operate train movements over the Western Maryland will be obtained by the State of West Virginia, but the actual ownership of the trackage will be in the hands of the Western Maryland - B&O - C&O Railroads.

The schedule of trips is difficult to state with certainty at this time, but it seems probable that they will be run on an every-other-week basis from Elkins and Webster Springs. This means that one week the trip would be made from Elkins to Spruce to Bald Knob (using Cass Scenic Railroad equipment on the last section) and return to Elkins; and the following week, the trip would be made from Webster Springs to Spruce to Bald Knob and return. Eventually as the demand arises, plans call for an increased number of trips with a trip being operated out of Elkins and

Webster Springs on the same day. The trains would meet at Spruce, allowing the adventurous to travel on to the opposite end of the line from which he started. Possibly more feasible will be the scheduling of straight through trips from one end of the line to the other, with provision made for bussing the passengers back to the starting place, or running the return trip on the following day. In any event, the schedule will be such



SEE PAGE 16 FOR TICKETS

Photo by G. Leroy Crislip

THE WORLD'S LARGEST existing Heisler, Class C, 100 ton - number 6 of the Cass Scenic Railroad.

that the regular operation of the Western Maryland will proceed as normal.

Whatever the schedule or the final plan, the railroad will give the tourist a real treat for his money

featuring steam locomotives from the past challenging the steepest, most crooked mainline railroad in the East. A trip on the Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad will truly be an experience of a lifetime!

Roles In Enacting Necessary Legislation



Governor
Arch A. Moore



Senator
E. Hansford McCourt



Senator
Carl E. Gainer



Delegate
D. P. "Sheriff" Given

These officials have played and will continue to play key roles in enacting the necessary legislation to officially establish the Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad.

Justification For A Railroad

by Clifford P. Carpenter

Beauty is only skin deep - an adage from bygone years - might be paraphrased to say scenic beauty is only surface deep. To the eye of the tourist, sightseer, or just plain nature lover, scenic beauty can and does take many forms and thus somewhat supports the idea that a person sees just what he looks for. The goldenrod flower is rather picturesque in the fall of the year, but to the hay-fever sufferer, the season of the goldenrod is the season not to be caught without those blessed, breath-giving, decongesting pills.

However one looks at our 559 square miles of nature here in Webster County, pros and cons will arise from all quarters. Consequently, this article is written from the biased viewpoint of a nature enthusiast that realizes his goldenrod may very well cause some of you to sneeze. Also, this article is designed to put stion "What is in Webster County to warrant a scenic railroad in the first place?"

In the first place, second place, etc., Webster County is isolated and this writer likes it that way. The mountain roads which semi-drivers curse, are in their own way, like an insurance policy for people that can't stand the thought of a hustling, bustling city. To a lot of people, the peace and solitude that abounds around us makes Webster County a haven for frayed nerves. We are isolated, of that there is no doubt; moreover, we are likely to stay that way until the helicopters become as common as automobiles. But this only adds to the already quaint and old-timish atmosphere in our county which is, in itself, a type of scenic beauty.

Along the more natural line, the mixture of glades and forests found here is somewhat an oddity. The glades, for which Glade District was named, do not occur frequently in West Virginia. Several reasons have been put forth for their existence - some people say Indians burned the areas so often that trees were killed out; others feel that soil conditions prevent the growth of trees; but then the soil and climate might favor the growth of grass more than it favors the growth of trees and thus the trees can't compete with the grass (such as the conditions in the prairie states) - but whatever the rea-

son, the area does serve to attract people that are interested in that type of botanical situation.

The forests here exhibit both the northern hardwoods and conifers at elevations above 3000 feet (or in local "frost pockets"), and the central hardwoods at lower elevations. This condition lends us a much greater variety of plant and animal life than can be found in many sections of the State. Too many times we think only to harp about how poor we are economically and how isolated we are without considering our blessings in terms of mountains, trees, flowers, streams, and wildlife. We have had all these things for so long in Webster County that we now take them for granted without pondering what life would be like without them.

More specifically, along the trackage of the proposed scenic railroad, many sights are to be found that would delight the senses of the most staunch of city dwellers. In some instances, the combination of man and nature presents scenes worthy of mention.

Nothing could be more scenic to this writer at this time than to see an old locomotive of any make or variety, build up a head of steam at the old depot in Webster Springs for the beginning of a smoky, noisy trip upstream along Elk River.

The track itself, winding and twisting along the river possesses some sort of magical attraction whether viewed on a misty morning or a stifling hot afternoon. Those people in the know have pronounced the track in excellent condition with nothing more than normal maintenance required to keep the track in condition for passenger train operation.

While waiting for that head of steam to build up, a visitor could take a short trip through the nearby railyard (wood rails, that is) to watch how the highly popular rail fence is made. Many of the yard's products are shipped as far as the Mississippi Valley. Just an example of a small industry that could not exist if poor, isolated Webster County did not have all these hills covered with trees. Though a lot of people have seen the modern-style rail fence, few have actually seen it made.

As indicated, scenes of interest



crop up before a scenic train would leave the depot. Sure, it's common to us, but not to the tourists that will come to ride a scenic train. Another close-at-hand attraction will be the Native Arts and Crafts Shop on Golden Shore. Here the tourists can purchase items of local culture and craftsmanship that will serve as souvenirs of the train trip. The articles at the shop show that skilled tradesman have been at work and points out a relatively untapped resource here in the county.

When the train finally blows its whistle and gets underway, it will travel only a short distance before other noteworthy scenery appears. Webster Springs High School, rather astutely situated along the riverbank in a residential area, would loom out of the early morning mist as a concrete reminder that civilization will forever remain tucked away in the halls of a somewhere land. Immediately beyond the school, Nature makes her presence known at Woodell Falls. Whether seen with its icy beard in the winter time or through a shroud of mist in the summer, visitors will never see the sun's rays strike the mossy cliff that creates the falls. In the cove behind the falls, about fifty species of plants can be found, a factor attributed to the frost pocket that dominates that area.

Behind the A & P Store and in the river by the School, can be seen two of the three outcroppings of limestone that are to be found in the Elk River in Webster County.

At the eastern end of the Town is an item of interest that must surely be found in the annals of every town or city. Whether viewed with wide-eyed fright from the top or from a crumpled heap at the bottom, Lover Leap is most

Editor's Note

In days gone by extract the timber from the mountain. Granted, in most profit; however, the pulling of cross the ice-covered to Shay-drawn logging will always be a not everywhere - and i

It is the hope of that the logging trail the land along the roads from Elkins County to Webster developed by the ic but in such a way a The trains will n tourists, worth fa capable of apprecia

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The Big Cut, with the Cass R most visitors. fossil hunters mostly by hand workers. It is and about 300 f a monument t eering spirit in this countr These were



Photo by G. Leroy Crislip

THE BIG CUT, built in 1910, would be a major point of interest along the scenic railroad. This photograph was made during the first inspection trip after which plans were formulated for the Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad.

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Editor's Note:

In days gone by, iron man and machines struggled to extract the timber from the rugged slopes throughout the state. Granted, in most instances, the sole governing motive was profit; however, the men whose very existence depended upon the pulling of crosscut saws, swinging an axe, or crawling over the ice-covered logs to set the brakes of several cars of a Shay-drawn logging train, have become a part of history which will always be a nostalgic memory in the minds of Americans everywhere--and in those of West Virginians most of all.

It is the hope of the editor and authors of this publication that the logging train can once again make its music throughout the land along the Western Maryland and Cass Scenic Railroads from Elkins in Randolph County through Pocahontas County to Webster Springs in Webster County. An area developed by the logging railroad can once again be developed but in such a way as to not mar the land for future generations. The trains will run again, but this time the cargo will be tourists, worth far more in relative weight than logs, and capable of appreciating the scenic beauty of this wonderful land.

Many people have been asked to help with this project, but few have responded. People seem content to let some one else do all the work and then reap the economic benefit for free. Perhaps our society has degenerated to this, but when one looks at the persons contacted for financial support who would have stood to profit from the railroad, but did not offer any assistance at all, one must wonder that money could possibly mean so much. Some of these individuals can remember when the area was known for its appeal to tourists and can also remember that unconcerned residents allowed this type of industry to die. Can the power of the almighty dollar be so great that the lessons of the past are ignored just to save a few dollars and then lose in the long run?

If those persons known as the "railroad team" had been paid for their many hours of work with the project, the bill would be in excess of \$100,000.00. They cannot and do not expect to ever make any money from the scenic railroad; their only reason for doing what they have done is their love of railroads. They want to see people come to the area to get a taste of the sights and sounds of the railroads of the past on what will be the world's longest scenic railroad.

It is to this end that the Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad Team has devoted its time and effort, and now dedicates this paper.

G. Leroy Cristlip, Editor
January 8, 1971

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surely a cliff that a person would step over only after due thought and consideration had been given to what the future offered - and even then, not needlessly.

Then, there is Cherry Falls and its namesake Cherry Falls - a quiet sort of rapids that makes no more than a dent in the Elk's glassy surface. On upstream to Parcoal and Curtin, scene of the Pardee and Curtin Lumber Mill which is a rather large operation that also exports products. The mill utilizes the railroad as a vital link for moving products to market.

Next comes Bergoo, an old mining and logging town that still feels the effects of those heyday years every time two large-size raindrops fall in the same place in either Leather wood or Bergoo Creek. A flashflood caused extensive damage to the existing bridge and roadway last July 16 and the effects are still evident.

After passing Bergoo, the grade begins to rise quickly. Not much time is wasted in getting to the variable boundary between the central hardwood forest (with its hickory, yellow poplar, oak and ash) and the northern hardwood forest sporting mostly beech, sugar maple, and yellow birch. Further up the mountains, the northern conifer region is reached with its thickly matted red spruce that give the mountain top the appearance of a Mohawk haircut.

Whittaker Falls will undoubtedly become a regular rest stop on the scenic route. Short but wide, the falls exhibits the woes of Niagara Falls - a soft layer of shale underneath the more-resistant top layer of sandstone is gradually washing away leaving no support for the top which eventually breaks off from its own weight. Many years from now, the falls will be nothing more than a rapids.

The Big Cut, near the junction with the Cass Railroad, will awe most visitors. Not of interest to fossil hunters, the cut was made mostly by hand in 1910 by Italian workers. It is about 100 feet high and about 300 feet long. It stands as a monument to the forceful pioneering spirit that once prevailed in this country.

There were but a few of the

points of major interest along the track to Bald Knob in Pocahontas County, but to be emphasized here is the fact that scenic beauty prevails all along the track and tourists will need necks made of rubber if they are to see everything.

There is one final point of attraction to be mentioned, and it was left intentionally until last. In Webster Springs there is to be found something called salt-sulphur water that no visitor to Town should miss, but each visitor should have, as I have had, the privilege of making it the first or last item on his agenda.



Collection of Georgia Donald

Wooddell Falls opposite the present Webster Springs High School building provide a part of the scenery along the future scenic railroad. This photo was taken before the Western Maryland was built.

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ALONG THE SCENIC RAILROAD

(By Gordon T. Hamrick - Continued from Page 14)

which has survived two flash floods in less than forty years - leads one into the old Western Maryland Railway yard complex. Just across the bridge, on the right, stood the depot; all that remains are a few concrete pilings. A few yards further upriver, where the equipment shed now stands, stood the water tower. At one time, a half dozen Baldwin engines could have been found in the yard at any given time; today, only the echoes of whistle and hiss of steam remain. The sidings sit empty, rails rusting, ties rotting.

Leaving Bergoo, the Scenic Railroad hugs the cliffs on the right. To the left, the highway shares the available space with the river. Every so often, these two contest the existing space; the river usually wins. Man may interfere with the river; he cannot tame or control it. Even the railroad is not immune to the ravages of the surging waters. Mute evidence of these constant skirmishes is found in the driftwood piled along the right-of-way.

At Bergoo Creek, the highway swings across the river, while the railroad continues on the right of the river. Evidence of one-time human habitation is visible along this stretch of railroad. Brush-choked river bottoms attest to one-time farms. Remains of various types of buildings are visible at different places. A patch of light-colored greenery on a slope tells of a hardy pioneer. Here and there, remains of suspension bridges remind the traveler that at one time, the railroad was the only means of access to the outside.

At Byers (Mine No. 4), the Pardee and Curtin tippie complex sits, silent and rusting, the sidings overgrown with weeds and brush. The river bottoms opposite the tippie, which once housed the Western Maryland Railway section crews and water tower, are slowly growing up in timber.

yet to carry its first load of coal. Difficulties of an unknown nature - possibly a question of mineral rights, a right-of-way problem, or insufficient coal to justify mining - caused the bridge to be abandoned. Although an occasional enterprising four-wheel drive enthusiast may cross it, it is generally limited to foot traffic - fishermen and hunters.

From Whittaker Falls, it is only a short distance to Hickory Lick and the former Bethlehem Steel Company mines. The tippie complex has fallen upon hard times, and sits silent, vacant windows staring over the once industrious area. The catwalks have fallen in; parts of the roof are askew. Some enterprising individual is building a loading platform on one of the sidings. Presumably, coal is to be trucked down from a strip mine on the mountain to the siding. Mercifully, the loading platform is on the side of the river opposite the Scenic Railroad. The road leading up the mountain is real - and ugly.

A few miles above Hickory Lick, the Greenbrier Limestone rises above the drainage and, after a distance of a mile or so, is elevated sufficiently for the railroad to cross it. Thereafter, the cliffs on the right are formed by the Greenbrier, rather than the Webster Springs sandstone which has predominated since leaving Webster Springs. At this point, also, the railroad swings almost due south for the run to Slaty Fork. To the right, Sharp's Knob is visible; visible also is the evidence of a change in the flora. Hardwoods no longer dominate the mountain tops; patches of what once was an unbroken stand of Red Spruce can be seen.

Many years ago, Aldo Leopold wrote, "Recreational development is not a job of building roads

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The cliffs along the entire length of the Scenic Railroad, which were once blasted from living rock to form a roadbed, have attained a serene maturity. Except for an occasional fresh scar caused by recent fracturing of the rock, most of the cliffs are covered with lichens and mosses. The violence required to create the roadbed is no longer in evidence.

Above Byers, the railroad opens into some of its longest and straightest stretches. Between Big Run and Whittaker Falls, the run is through a spectacular area. A massive cliff on the left of the river reaches some three hundred feet vertically. Across the face of this cliff, the secondary highway that provides access to the area winds precariously.

Whittaker Falls, on the Webster-Randolph County line, was once a magnificent view. Alas, but time has taken its toll. What was once a thirty-foot flume at the turn of the century has degenerated into little more than a glorified rapid. The terrible scouring power of a swift-flowing stream is in evi-

form on one of the sidings. Presumably, coal is to be trucked down from a strip mine on the mountain to the siding. Mercifully, the loading platform is on the side of the river opposite the Scenic Railroad. The road leading up the mountain is real and ugly.

A few miles above Hickory Lick, the Greenbrier Limestone rises above the drainage and, after a distance of a mile or so, is elevated sufficiently for the railroad to cross it. Thereafter, the cliffs on the right are formed by the Greenbrier, rather than the Webster Springs sandstone which has predominated since leaving Webster Springs. At this point, also, the railroad swings almost due south for the run to Slaty Fork. To the right, Sharp's Knob is visible; visible also is the evidence of a change in the flora. Hardwoods no longer dominate the mountain tops; patches of what once was an unbroken stand of Red Spruce can be seen.

Many years ago, Aldo Leopold wrote, "Recreational development is not a job of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind. We owe it to ourself and to the good earth that supports us to curb our avarice to the extent of leaving a few spots untouched and unexploited . . ." The Scenic Railroad proposes to do this by utilizing already existing facilities to give the tourist a leisurely contact with nature and the past.

EPILOGUE

The foregoing is a reasonably complete representation of my impressions and notes; the impersonal view recorded by a well stopped-down camera lens is quite different. The route out of Webster Springs by rail is no different from any other city, regardless of size. Shacks with rusting washing machines on the porches line the right-of-way. Old beer cans, automobile hulks, automobile tires, and other debris line the right-of-way and the streams. Scattered garbage dumps are visible along the highways. Abandoned coal tippie and slag heaps dominate the landscape. The hills are criss-crossed by a maze of roads, leading to mining operations or to lumbering operations. Each rain contributes its quota of precious

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occasional piece of pipe stuck into
some rivulet to form a faucet.

The cliffs along the entire length
of the Scenic Railroad, which were
once blasted from living rock to
form a roadbed, have attained a
sere maturity. Except for an oc-
cassional fresh scar caused by
recent fracturing of the rock, most
of the cliffs are covered with lich-
ens and mosses. The violence
required to create the roadbed is
no longer in evidence.

Above Byers, the railroad opens
into some of it's longest and stra-
ightest stretches. Between Big
Run and Whittaker Falls, the run
is through a spectacular area.
A massive cliff on the left of the
river reaches some three hundred
feet vertically. Across the face
of this cliff, the secondary high-
way that provides access to the
area winds precariously.

Whittaker Falls, on the Webster-
Randolph County line, was once a
magnificent view. Alas, but time
has taken it's toll. What was once
a thirty-foot flume at the turn of
the century has degenerated into
little more than a glorified rapid.
The terrible scouring power of a
swiftly-flowing stream is in evi-
dence here. A recent fracturing
on the face of the falls did little
to enhance it's appearance; how-
ever, this is the only falls on the
river worthy of the name. A few
more years, and Whittaker Falls
will be only a memory. Replacing
it will be a series of chutes in
the "slickrock."

Just above Whittaker Falls is a
monument to the folly of men - the
completely useless Rose Run brid-
ge. Just who built it, and why,
has never been completely deter-
mined. Supposedly, it was built
by a coal company to carry trucks
across the river, the bridge has

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contributes it's quota of precious
topsoil to that already in the stream
channels - and to the mudflats in
Sutton Reservoir.

One fact is inescapable - the
extractive industries as presently
operating are not compatible with
tourism. We can have one or the
other; we cannot have both operat-
ing in the same are concurrently.
Which will it be? If the Scenic
Railroad is to become a reality,
Webster County must roll up it's
collective sleeves and get down to
the serious business of cleaning
up the landscape.

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As you are faced with the
knowledge that between you and
a number of other people,
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Photo by G. Leroy Crislip

ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT KNOWN at this time whether or not the scenic railroad will operate during the winter, that season provides some spectacular scenery along cliff-bound Elk River.



ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT KNOWN at this time whether or not the scenic railroad will operate during the winter, that season provides some spectacular scenery along cliff-bound Elk River.

Photo by G. Leroy Cristlip



THE GREENBRIER LIMESTONE has been worn into interesting pattern in Elk River below Whittaker Falls.

Compliments



GO . . .

to the specialist who displays this Sign of Good Service



Webster
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PHOTOLOGUE

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LOGGING RAILROADS AND LOGGING CAMPS

(By Gordon T. Hamrick - Continued from Page 6)

At Bill McCourt's Leatherwood camp, the family I visited was that of Ray Bright. Ray was "lobby hog" for the camp. His son, Shirley, and I were in the same class and became great friends. I thought nothing of the four miles or so to hike to and from school. All I was interested in was what went on at the camp. If I was lucky, one of the teamsters would even let me take his team to water, and it was really a thrill to be entrusted with the care of those animals.

Since my father was a logging contractor, animals and I were no strangers. However, my father used mostly mules on his jobs and for this reason, they were known as "The Jackass Jobs." Over the years, we had a variety of critters, some exemplary, but mostly ornery. There was "Mable" gentle and intelligent, but she could not stand a kid. There was "George", who had as foul a disposition as anything or anyone I have ever met. He came from Virginia as a half-broken two-year old. During his first week in the woods, he nearly lost a foot when he failed to get out of the way of a trail of logs headed downhill.

George retained his foul disposition to the end; he was never ridden, and to shoe him, it was necessary to rope him in the "stocks."

Among the other animals, there was a pair of medium-weight horses, named "Charlie" and "Fannie." Charlie was of a placid disposition, and would stand while kids crawled around, over, and under him, or swung on his tail. He thought, however, that four-thirty a.m. was a fine time to kick the siding off his stall. Every barn he was stabled in could be recognized by the lack of siding around his stall. "Fannie", while not as placid as "Charlie", was intelligent and easy to handle; indeed, like most women, she often had a mind of her own and acted without direction from the handler.

None of the animals my father used could be compared with the horses used by McCourt. I did not realize until much later that the animals my father used were selected with a view toward their being able to move quickly; McCourt's animals, on the other hand, were selected for their ability to pull a heavy load.

For logging horses, Bill Mc-



A Pardee
and lots of it.

a matched pair of weighed 2200 pound horses, like all logging bridles with short n... the boy on the back... critters with a sh... when the horse rea... drink, the boy is g... splash. The few tin... to drink, one or th... be sure to switch his... in the drink I would... lot of time drying o... of the boarding hous... In later years, I sus



PINING



From the Knicely Collection

A Pardee & Curtin logging camp lacked much in appearance, but there was always good food and lots of it.

a matched pair of grays which weighed 2200 pounds each. The horses, like all logging teams, had bridles with short reins. Put a little boy on the back of one of those critters with a short rein, and when the horse reached down to drink, the boy is going off with a splash. The few times I led them to drink, one or the other would be sure to switch his head, and off in the drink I would go. I spent a lot of time drying out in the lobby of the boarding house that winter. In later years, I suspected that the

team had been well trained.

In every logging camp, there was sure to be a number of mongerels of indeterminate breed. We would borrow a lantern from the stable hand, cuff up a lazy dog or two, and set forth on a coon hunt. The late Robert Ruark once expressed the opinion that any man who went coon hunting was simply looking for an excuse to get drunk and fall into a brier patch. We didn't get drunk, but we did fall into a number of brier patches and knocked out the light. The natural state of

events is that you have no matches, and you are faced with the certain knowledge that between you and camp lie a number of brier patches, several miles of rough territory, a number of streams, all of which are certainly inhabited by bears and other animals of strange sorts. Things like this lend a certain zest, not to say speed, to the return to camp. We never did encounter a coon - I don't know what we would have done had we accidentally tripped over one. Probably we would have been as surprised as the coon. The dogs weren't content with a day's returning in the middle of the night, brier scratched, shins barked, and about half-asleep, there are few things as cheerful as a fire in the kitchen, with a cook who is tolerant and understanding of little



Maybe it was luck that kept a

by McCourt. I did
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From the Knically Collection

Eli "Rimfire" Hamrick, the Typical Mountaineer; was one of the early
 Webster County woodsmen.

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THE HUB STORE

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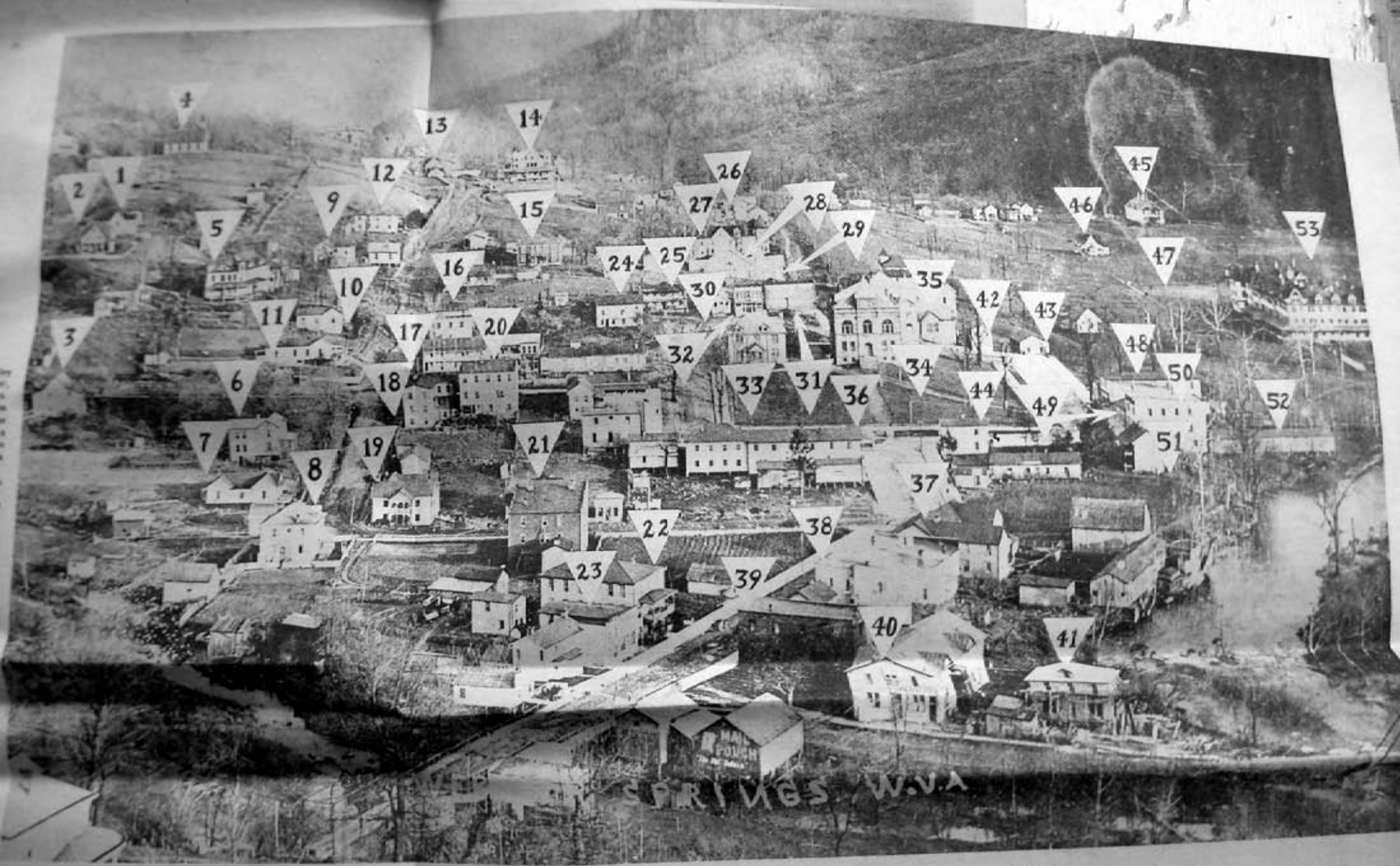
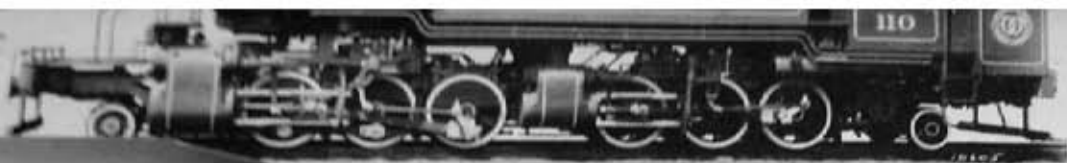
From the Knicely Collection

HORSES WERE A MAJOR PART of the early logging scene. This was
surpower in the truest sense of the word.

DODD & HURT



attracted logging companies.
The Morristown gave the West a new
for its money in the logging in-
dustry. The principle was sim-
ple. But the cost was high. At
least. The Morristown could be an
admirable source for timber. It
is 27 miles to the nearest town.



Webster Springs, West Virginia, Around 1912

The author has attempted to identify the buildings shown in the photograph. The following list identifies the buildings shown in the photograph. (1) Morristown; (2) Morristown; (3) Morristown; (4) Morristown; (5) Morristown; (6) Morristown; (7) Morristown; (8) Morristown; (9) Morristown; (10) Morristown; (11) Morristown; (12) Morristown; (13) Morristown; (14) Morristown; (15) Morristown; (16) Morristown; (17) Morristown; (18) Morristown; (19) Morristown; (20) Morristown; (21) Morristown; (22) Morristown; (23) Morristown; (24) Morristown; (25) Morristown; (26) Morristown; (27) Morristown; (28) Morristown; (29) Morristown; (30) Morristown; (31) Morristown; (32) Morristown; (33) Morristown; (34) Morristown; (35) Morristown; (36) Morristown; (37) Morristown; (38) Morristown; (39) Morristown; (40) Morristown; (41) Morristown; (42) Morristown; (43) Morristown; (44) Morristown; (45) Morristown; (46) Morristown; (47) Morristown; (48) Morristown; (49) Morristown; (50) Morristown; (51) Morristown; (52) Morristown; (53) Morristown.

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The author has attempted to identify the majority of the buildings shown in the above photo by talking with several of the town's residents who could remember Webster Springs of 1912. The type of building or the owner and in some cases both are: (1) Flann Hamrick; (2) Woodale; (3) Daily Blacksmith Shop; (4) Methodist Church; (5) Dormitory; (6) Tom Daily; (7) Woodsel; (8) Skidmore (9) Dr. McLaugh-

reported influx of tourists.

It is hardly a coincidence that the name of the town was changed to Webster Springs in 1903; that construction of the now-famous Webster Springs Hotel was begun in 1904; and that the Honorable John T. McGraw chartered the West Virginia Midland Railroad, which swallowed the Holly River and Addison Railway Company, in 1905.

The Honorable John T. McGraw, from Grafton, W. Va., was a man of vision and ambition. He owned timber and mineral interests in the Webster Springs area. Development of the industrial interests required a railroad; why not develop the tourist facilities at the same time? And Col. McGraw forthwith set forth to make Webster Springs one of the nation's best known

tourist attr

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(10) Mason; (11) Dyer; (12) Rimfire Hamrick; (13) Withers; (14) Morton's;
(15) Tailor Shop; (16) Kelly Hamrick; (17) Currey; (18) Hamrick Hotel; (19) Nicho-
lson; (20) Cash Store; (21) Valley Hotel; (22) Hotel Rutherford; (23) Dr. Allen
(24) Miner; (25) Blanche; (26) Arthur; (27) Oakland Hotel; (28) Church; (29) Currey;
(30) Webster Hotel; (31) Bank; (32) Cash Store; (33) Jail; (34) Court House;

ations.

Virginia Midland Rail-
road of the Baltimore and
Ohio, was, in itself, a
work of engineering. Wand-
ering on switchbacks at an
average between the Holly
Springs, through deep rock
creeks the high trestles,
which the Webster Springs
Hotel is arranged as if by

a movie director.

The Webster Springs Hotel, at
that time the largest frame build-
ing in the world and the second
largest hotel in West Virginia,
was a suitable setting for the
scene. Built largely of native
lumber, the Webster Springs Hotel
boasted of 300 rooms, a dining
room, a ballroom, Turkish and
Russian baths, plus a host of other

amenities, such as bowling alleys,
miniature golf courses, riding
bles, the best fishing in the coun-
ty. Deep carpeting floored the ro-
oms and halls; the food was sec-
ond to none. Stuffed and mounted head-
s of native game - deer, elk, buffalo
(bison), bear, plus a host of le-
sser animals - lined the hallways.
A pond in back of the hotel speckled
with geese and ducks. A walkway known
as "McGraw's Promenade"
led from the Hotel to the Salt Sul-



nd 1912

(35) Church; (36) Hicks Building; (37) Skidmore Hotel; (38) Gregory Hotel; (39) People's Store; (40) Tracy Building; (41) Truman Rose; (42) Miller; (43) Feed Store; (44) Enick Law Office; (45) Stable; (46) White; (47) Pool (48) Gillespie's Store; (49) Klondike; (50) Drug Store and Post Office; (51) Moore's Shoeshop; (52) Bowling Alley; and (53) Webster Springs Hotel.

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Well. (Contrary to popular belief, the Salt Sulphur Well is not the original Fork Lick Spring. The spring, located as it was, at the junction of the Elk and Back Fork of the Elk, suffered from pollution by flooding following each heavy rain. Addison McLaughlin drilled the Salt Sulphur Well sometime between the years of 1850 and 1860, in search of salt brine. The

different levels. The water from this well is unique in the high carbon dioxide content, which gives it it's characteristic "bite." No other well in the state can claim such a distinction.

By the time Col. McGraw chart-ered the West Virginia Midland Railroad in 1905, the trickle of tourists into Webster Springs dur-ing the summer months had become

The Rise And Fall Of A Tourist Center

by Gordon T. Hamrick



The salt well lay as it had lain these many thousands of years, resting easily in the hollow hands of the rocks. Born of the earth's travail, the valley in which the salt well lay had come into being amid that period of mountain-building now known as the Appalachian Revolution. Amid the shattering of rock, the uplifting and fracturing of a continental vertebra, great fault cracks opened in the earth's crust.

This was a lonely land, rent and torn by earthquakes, its surface shattered and cracked. In an age long past, there had been greater rainfall and the area had rested under a warm, shallow, inland sea. Following the uplifting of the mountains, glaciers spread down from the north and rainfall became greater. Deep valleys were carved into the landscape, as the more resistant rocks on the ridges channeled the run-off into streams which gouged ever deeper into the crust of the earth.

After the glaciers retreated in the country to the north, rainfall became less. Vegetation appeared on the slopes of the mountains. A trickle of water high on a ridge seeped into a crack in the rock and disappeared, only to reappear in the river bed, far below. On its way through the rock strata, the water had picked up mineral salts in solution, and the last of the great reptiles paused along the river to drink of the salt solution.

There was a further rending of rock, and the last of the great reptiles vanished, a few lingering on to color the legends of the Indians who came drifting down from the north and from the west. The first of the mammals came to drink

at the salt spring.

Time passed, and several thousand years ago, a man came to drink, the first of the hunters and food gatherers to find this remote spot. The primitive man carried a stone hand-axe and a throwing stick with a spear. A deer came to drink, unaware that the hunter was crouched in the rocks and brush behind him. The deer heard the man when he moved to make his spear-thrust, but it was too late. The hunter skinned out his victim, ate a part of it, and departed for the west.

Few hunters came so far south or east. Hunting was good elsewhere, without crossing into the mountainous region. Only in times of necessity did hunters come so far south and east.

The white man settled the coast of North America, forcing the Indians deeper into the interior of the continent. Each succeeding wave of settlers moved westward, until, for a time, the Indians disappeared into the interior of the continent. The Indians, learning of the salt spring, returned here more frequently to hunt; yet, so far as can be determined, no Indian ever called the valley home. Game was plentiful, the Shawnee Indians named the river which flowed through the valley the Elk River - Elk Tiskel-wah, "river of fat elk."

In, or prior to, 1785, the valley was visited by a bearded stranger, a white man named Abram Meirs. The locality subsequently became known as Fork Lick, since the salt lick which gave the site its name was located at the junction of the Elk River and the Back Fork of the Elk River.

History does not record the name of the first settler at Fork Lick. When Webster County was created by an Act of the Virginia General Assembly, January 10, 1860, from Nicholas, Braxton, and Randolph counties, the statute provided that the name of the seat of justice - or county seat - should be Addison (from Addison McLaughlin, the owner of the land on which the town was located). An Act of the West Virginia Legislature in 1903 changed the name to Webster Springs.

Why Webster Springs, rather than Addison, one might ask? The answer is simple. Money. Tourist money. Fork Lick was well known as a mineral springs prior to the War Between the States. History does not record the name of the earliest proprietor to exploit the mineral properties of the spring. However, roads and railroads were non-existent; consequently, travel was limited to mule trail. Few travelers braved the wilderness to visit the mineral spring. A group of enterprising businessmen, who-

were carved into the landscape, as the more resistant rocks on the ridges channeled the run-off into streams which gouged ever deeper into the crust of the earth.

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The Webster Springs Hotel was during its existence (1904-1925) the largest frame building in the world having a total of 300 rooms. Many facilities even today considered luxuries were commonplace at this tourist center.

Number 10 of the W. Va. Midland loading at the platform across Elk River from the Webster Springs Hotel. The end of the suspension bridge can be seen at the left.

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The Holly River Railroad Company managed to complete construction of a narrow-gauge railroad as far as Hochmer on the Holly River in Webster County before it was acquired by the Holly River and Addison Railway Company. The line from Diana, on Holly River, to Addison, on the Elk River, was completed in 1901 or 1902. Presumably, the Webster Springs Hotel had also been completed by this time, to handle the

The author above photo b Webster Springs both are: (1) Church; (5) De

expected inflow. It is hardly the name of to Webster Springs construction Webster Springs in 1904, and John T. McC West Virginia which swallow and Addison F 1905.



Collection of Stuart Criss



Clifton Trestle on the W. Va. Midland between Elk was typical of the "breathtaking" scenery along the ra

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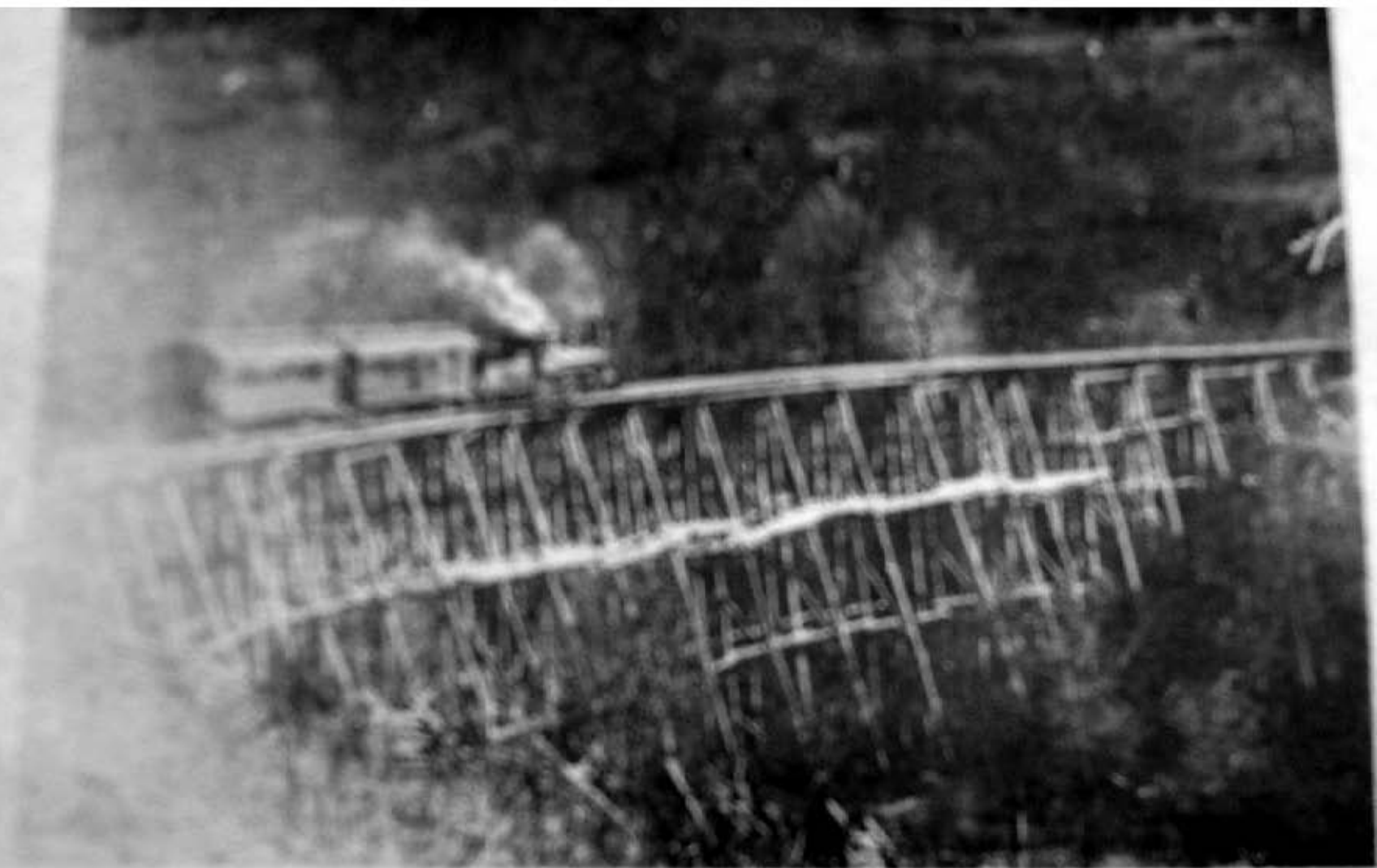
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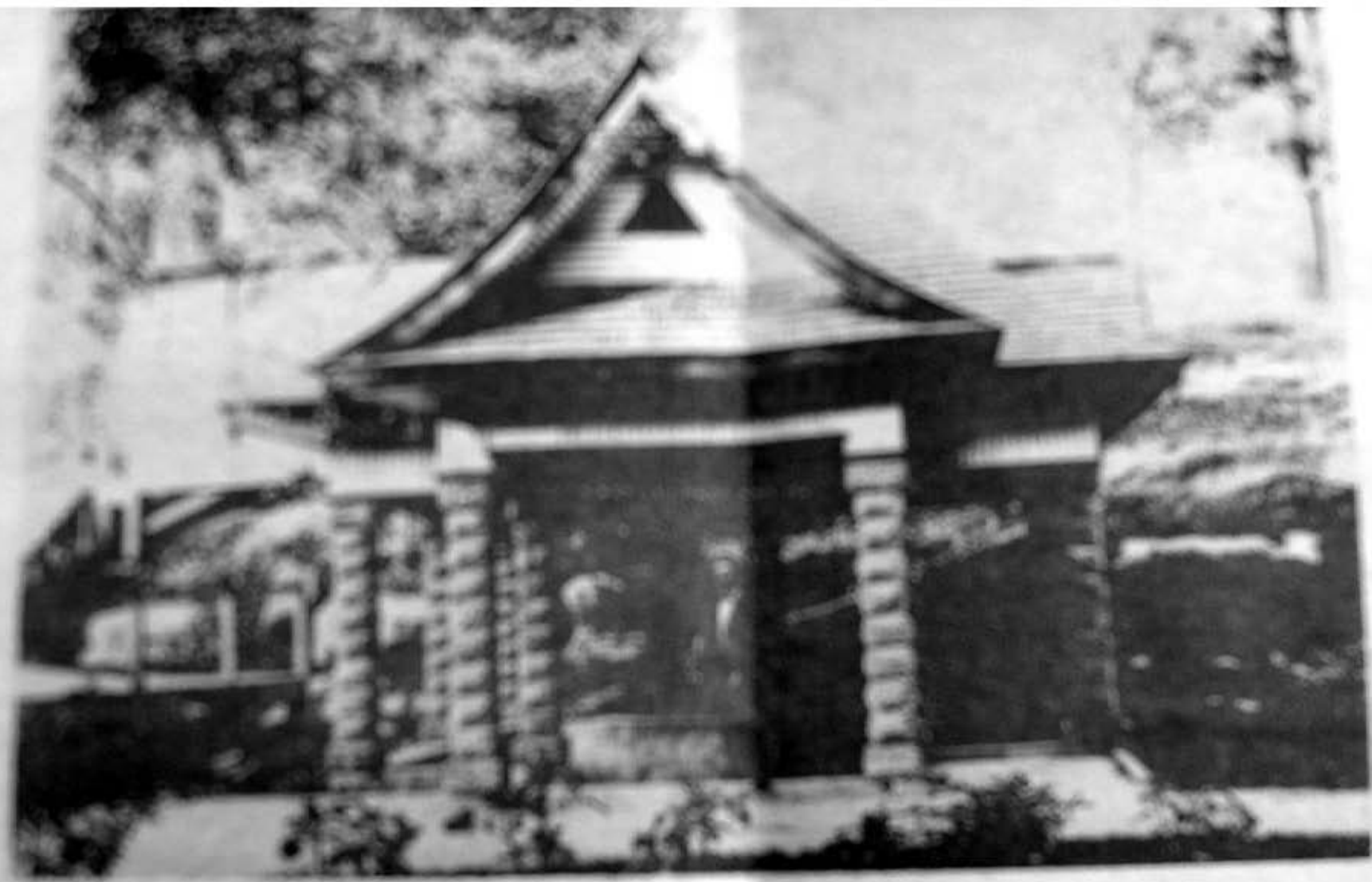
Number 10 of the W. Va. Midland loading at the platform across Elk River from the Webster Springs Hotel. The end of the suspension bridge can be seen at the left.

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Collection of Georgia Donald
Clifton Trestle on the W. Va. Midland between Elk and Holly Rivers
was typical of the "breathtaking" scenery along the railroad.

The
and
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Collection of E. James Gillespie

The Salt Sulphur Well drilled by Addison McLaughlin between 1850 and 1860 to a depth of 169 feet was a tourist attraction for many years until it was eventually allowed to fall into ruin.

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 bison), bear, p
 animals - line
 pond in back
 geese and duck
 as "McGraw"
 from the Hotel



...the Gilliam
 (1891)
 many years



Collection of Gordon T. Hamrick
 "Lovers' Lane" which extended
 up Bank Fork in the general area
 of Bull Street was one of the few
 "sidewalks" in the early days.



The Klondike

...a dining
...Turkish and
...a hotel of either



...don T. Hamerick
...which celebrated
...the general area
...one of the few
...the early days.

...small - lined the hallways. A
...point in back of the hotel stood
...goose and ducks. A walkway known
...as "McGraw's Promenade" led
...from the hotel to the Salt Sulphur



Collection of Berlin Chapman
The Klondike was a classic example of the ice-cream parlor of the past.

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tourists into Webster Springs
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The West Virginia
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reason, did not dis
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(Continued)

The Rise And Fall Of A Tourist Center

by Gordon T. Hamrick



The salt well lay as it had lain these many thousands of years, resting easily in the hollow hands of the rocks. Born of the earth's travail, the valley in which the salt well lay had come into being amid that period of mountain-building now known as the Appalachian Revolution. Amid the shattering of rock, the uplifting and fracturing of a continental vertebra, great fault cracks opened in the earth's crust.

This was a lonely land, rent and torn by earthquakes, its surface shattered and cracked. In an age long past, there had been greater rainfall and the area had rested under a warm, shallow, inland sea. Following the uplifting of the mountains, glaciers spread down from the north and rainfall became greater. Deep valleys were carved into the landscape, as the more resistant rocks on the ridges channeled the run-off into streams which gouged ever deeper into the crust of the earth.

After the glaciers retreated in the country to the north, rainfall became less. Vegetation appeared on the slopes of the mountains. A trickle of water high on a ridge seeped into a crack in the rock and

There was a further ridding of rain, and the last of the great glaciers retreated, a few lingering at the foot of the legends of the Indians who came drifting down from the north and from the west. The first of the Indians came to drink

at the salt spring.

Time passed, and several thousand years ago, a man came to drink, the first of the hunters and food gatherers to find this remote spot. The primitive man carried a stone hand-axe and a throwing stick with a spear. A deer came to drink, unaware that the hunter was crouched in the rocks and brush behind him. The deer heard the man when he moved to make his spear-thrust, but it was too late. The hunter skinned out his victim, ate a part of it, and departed for the west.

Few hunters came so far south or east. Hunting was good elsewhere, without crossing into the mountainous region. Only in times of necessity did hunters come so far south and east.

The white man settled the coast of North America, forcing the Indians deeper into the interior of the continent. Each succeeding wave of settlers moved westward, more forcing the Indians deeper into the interior of the continent. The Indians, learning of the salt spring, returned here more frequently to hunt, yet, so far as can be determined, no Indian ever called the valley home. Game was plentiful, the Shawnee Indians named the river which flowed through the valley the Elk River - Elk Tiskel-wah, "river of fat elk."

In, or prior to, 1785, the valley was visited by a bearded stranger, a white man named Abram Meirs. The locality subsequently became known as Fork Lick, since the salt lick which gave the site its name was located at the junction of the Elk River and the Back Fork of the Elk River.

History does not record the name of the first settler at Fork Lick. When Webster County was created by an Act of the Virginia General Assembly, January 10, 1860, from Nicholas, Braxton, and Randolph counties, the statute provided that the name of the seat of justice - or county seat - should be Addison (from Addison McLaughlin, the owner of the land on which the town was located). An Act of the West Virginia Legislature in 1903 changed the name to Webster Springs.

Why Webster Springs, rather than Addison, one might ask? The answer is simple. Money. Money. Money. Fork Lick was well known as a mineral springs prior to the War Between the States. History does not record the name of the earliest proprietor to exploit the mineral properties of the spring. However, roads and railroads were non-existent; consequently, travel was limited to mule trail. Few travelers braved the wilderness to visit the mineral spring. A group of enterprising businessmen, whose names are lost to history, proposed to change all this. In 1888 or 1889, they chartered the Holly River Railroad Company, with a view of developing and offering rail facilities for the visitors to (then) Addison in the summer months for the purpose of drinking and bathing at the Salt Sulphur waters. Construction of the original unit of the Webster Springs Hotel was begun at about the same time.



The salt well above which Webster Springs was built and the original hotel.

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seeped into a crack in the rock and
disappeared, only to reappear in
the river bed, far below. On
it's way through the rock strata,
the water had picked up mineral
salts in solution, and the last of
the great reptiles paused along the
river to drink of the salt solution.

There was a further rending of
rock, and the last of the great
reptiles vanished, a few lingering
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The Holly River Railroad Com-
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River, was completed in 1901 or
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Springs Hotel had also been com-
pleted by this time, to handle the

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Collection of Berlin Chapman

The Webster Springs Hotel was during its existence (1904-1925) the
largest frame building in the world having a total of 300 rooms. Many
facilities even today considered luxuries were commonplace at this
tourist center.



Collection of Stuart Criss

Number 10 of the W. Va. Midland loading at the platform across
the river from the Webster Springs Hotel. The end of the suspension



Clifton Trestle on the W. Va. Midland

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The Holly River Railroad Company managed to complete construction of a narrow-gauge railroad as far as Hechmer on the Holly River in Webster County before it was acquired by the Holly River and Addison Railway Company. The line from Diana, on Holly River, to Addison, on the Elk River, was completed in 1901 or 1902. Presumably, the Webster Springs Hotel had also been completed by this time, to handle the



Webster

The author has attempted to identify the majority of the buildings shown in the above photo by talking with several of the town's residents who could remember Webster Springs of 1912. The type of building or the owner and in some cases both are: (1) Flem Hamrick; (2) Woodale; (3) Daily Blacksmith Shop; (4) Methodist Church; (5) Dormitory; (6) Tom Daily; (7) Woodsel; (8) Skidmore (9) Dr. McLaugh-

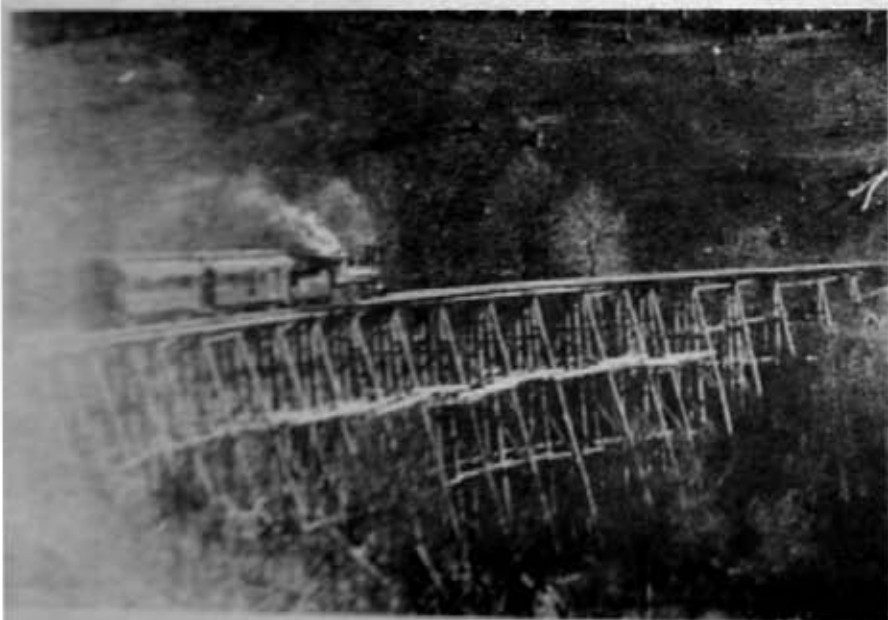
expected influx of tourists.

It is hardly a coincidence that the name of the town was changed to Webster Springs in 1903; that construction of the now-famous Webster Springs Hotel was begun in 1904; and that the Honorable John T. McGraw chartered the West Virginia Midland Railroad, which swallowed the Holly River and Addison Railway Company, in 1905.

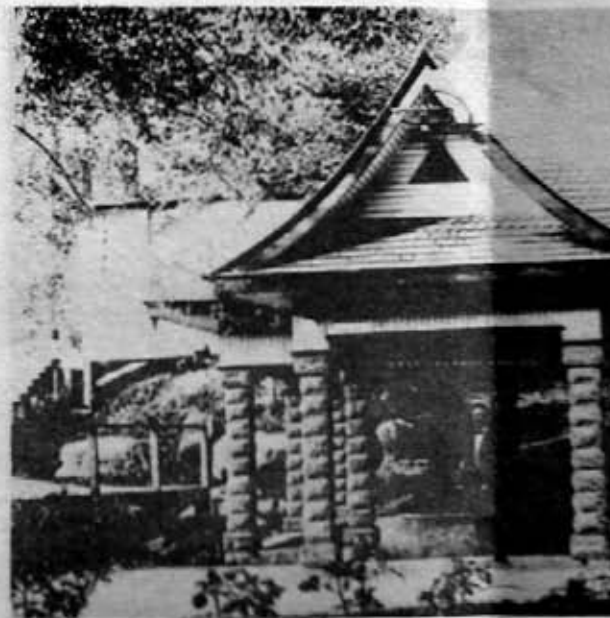
The Honorable John T. McGraw, from Grafton, W. Va., was a man of vision and ambition. He owned timber and mineral interests in the Webster Springs area. Development of the industrial interests required a railroad; why not develop the tourist facilities at the same time? And Col. McGraw forthwith set forth to make Webster Springs one of the nation's best known

tourist attraction.

The West road, a branch of the Ohio Railroad, was a masterpiece of engineering by means of the road, across the river and Elk River cuts, and at the approach was as curious



Collection of Georgia Donald
Clifton Trestle on the W. Va. Midland between Elk and Holly Rivers was typical of the "breathtaking" scenery along the railroad.



Collection of Georgia Donald
The Salt Sulphur Well drilled by Addison McL... and 1860 to a depth of 169 feet was a tourist attraction until it was eventually allowed to fall into ruin.

Webster Springs, West Virginia, Ar

ton; (10) Wysong; (11) Dyer; (12) Rimfire Hamrick; (13) Withers (14) Mor
(15) Talbot Hotel; (16) Kelly Hamrick; (17) Currey; (18) Hamrick Hotel; (19) I
las; (20) Cash Store; (21) Valley Hotel; (22) Hotel Rutherford; (23) Dr
(24) Hines; (25) Benetdy; (26) Arthur; (27) Oakland Hotel; (28) Church; (29) C
(30) Webster Echo; (31) Bank; (32) Couch Store; (33) Jail; (34) Court

of the buildings shown in the
residents who could remember
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The West Virginia Midland Rail-
road, a branch of the Baltimore and
Ohio Railroad, was, in itself, a
masterpiece of engineering. Wind-
ing by means of switchbacks ac-
ross the ridge between the Holly
and Elk River, through deep rock
cuts, and across the high trestles,
the approach to Webster Springs
was as cunningly arranged as if by

a movie director.

The Webster Springs Hotel, at
that time the largest frame build-
ing in the world and the second
largest hotel in West Virginia,
was a suitable setting for the
scene. Built largely of native
lumber, the Webster Springs Hotel
boasted of 300 rooms, a dining
room, a ballroom, Turkish and
Russian baths, plus a host of other

amenities, s
miniature go
bles, the bes
Deep carpet
and halls; t
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Collection of E. James Gillespie
or Well drilled by Addison McLaughlin between 1850
ft of 100 feet was a tourist attraction for many years
ally allowed to fall into ruin.



Collection of Gordon T. Hamrick
"Lovers' Lane" which extended
up Back Fork in the general area
of Bell Street was one of the few
"sidewalks" in the early days.



The Klor

nd 1912

(35) Church; (36) Hicks Building; (37) Skidmore Hotel; (38) Gregory Hotel; (39) People's Store; (40) Tracy Building; (41) Truman Rose; (42) Miller; (43) Feed Store; (44) Enick Law Office; (45) Stable; (46) White; (47) Pool (48) Gillespie's Store; (49) Klondike; (50) Drug Store and Post Office; (51) Moore's Shoeshop; (52) Bowling Alley; and (53) Webster Springs Hotel.

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... Salt Sulphur

Well. (Contrary to popular belief, the Salt Sulphur Well is not the original Fork Lick Spring. The spring, located as it was, at the junction of the Elk and Back Fork of the Elk, suffered from pollution by flooding following each heavy rain. Addison McLaughlin drilled the Salt Sulphur Well some time between the years of 1850 and 1860, in search of salt brine. The Well, reaching a depth of 169 feet, draws mineral water(s) from two

different levels. The water from this well is unique in the high carbon dioxide content, which gives it it's characteristic "bite." No other well in the state can claim such a distinction.-

By the time Col. McGraw chartered the West Virginia Midland Railroad in 1905, the trickle of tourists into Webster Springs during the summer months had become a torrent. Hotels sprang up, as if by magic, although many of them were hardly qualified for the name, even by the standards of that day. In one of the earliest known pictures of Webster Springs, taken shortly after the turn of the century, no fewer than eight hotels are identifiable, including the Webster Springs Hotel. According to senior citizens, there have been no fewer than twenty-two hotels located in Webster Springs at one time or another during the past seventy years.

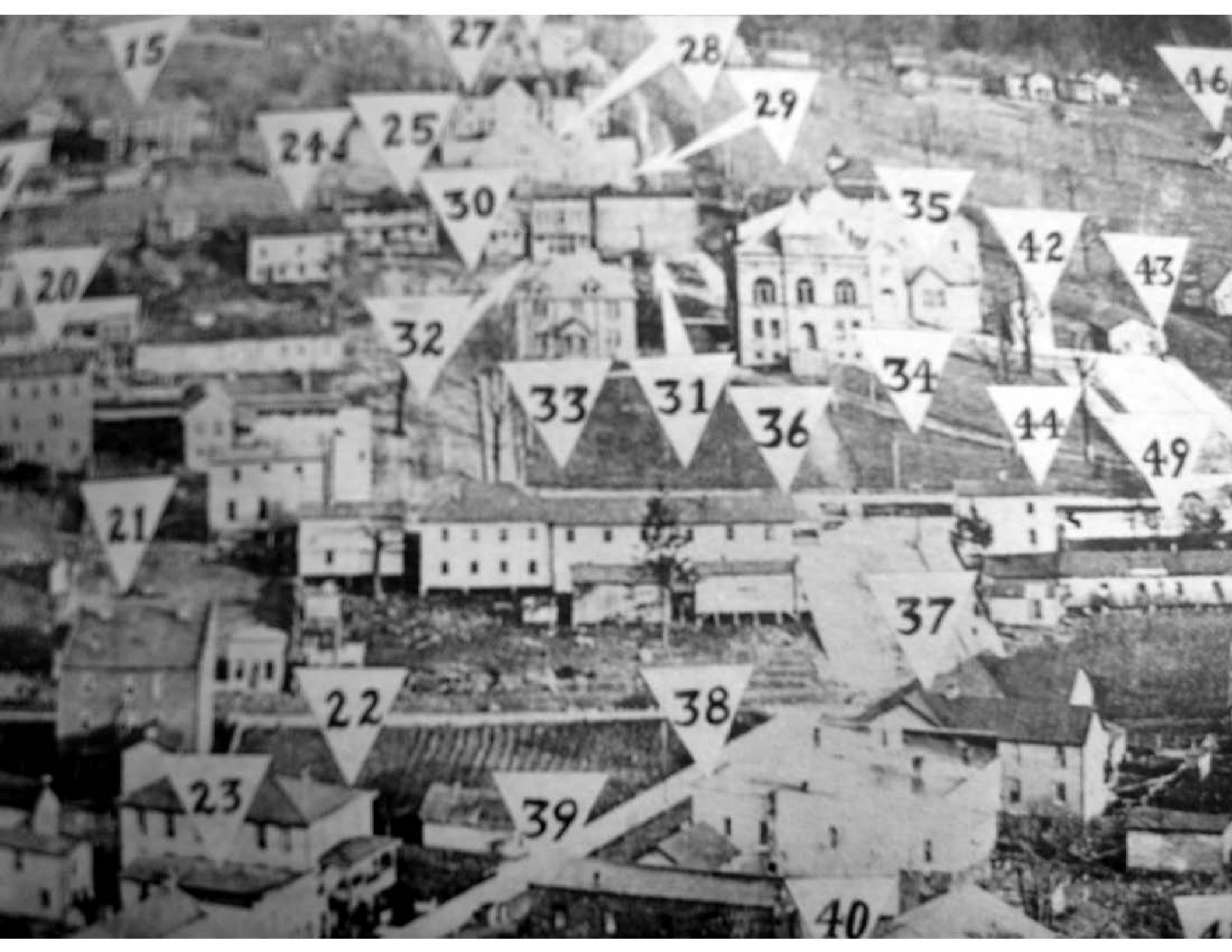
The West Virginia Midland passenger train, for some obscure reason, did not discharge passengers at the depot in Dorrtown; passengers were discharged at the bridge across the Back Fork of Elk at the point where State Route 20 North now crosses the Back

(Continued on Page 10)



Collection of Bertie Chapman

... classic examples of the ice-cream parlor of the past.



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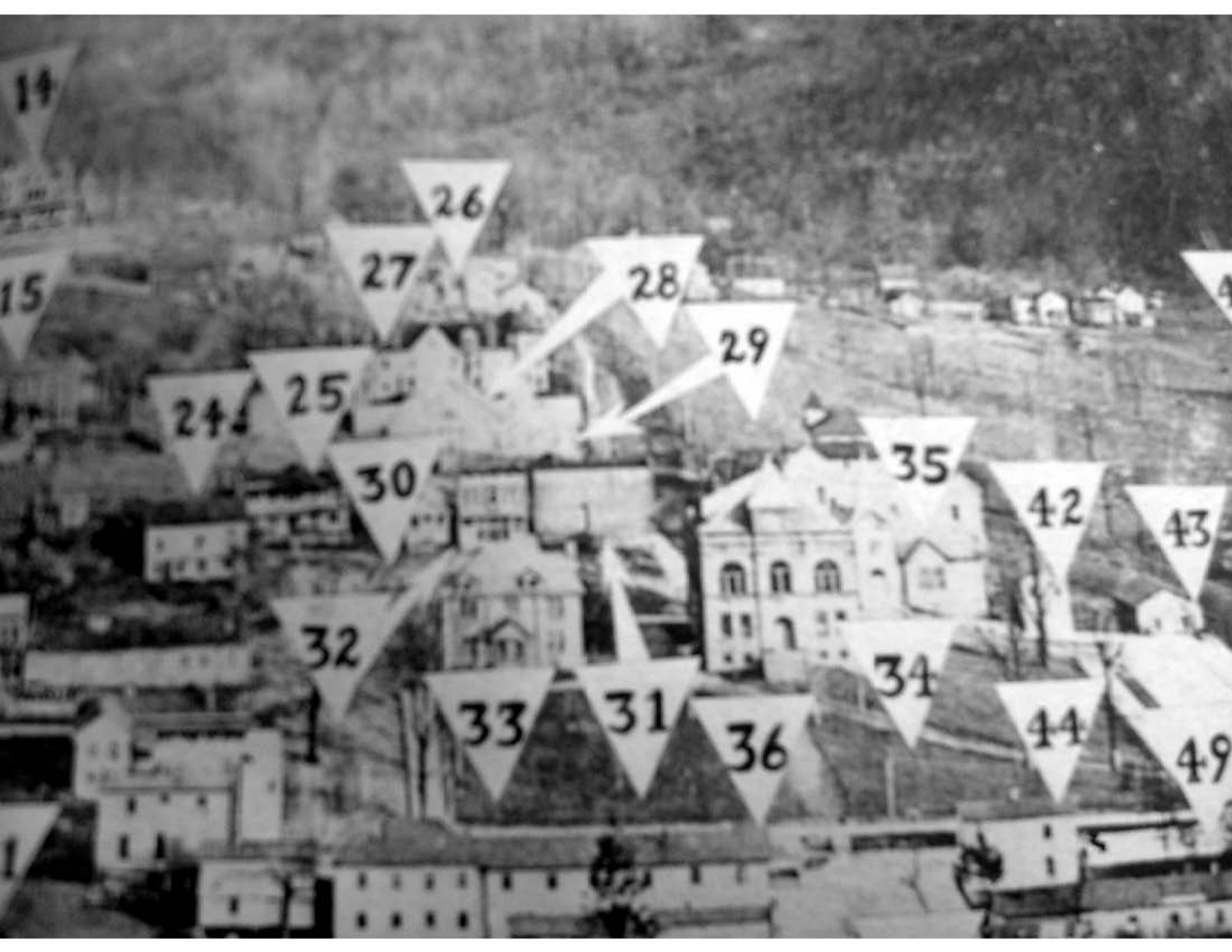
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The Oakland Hotel, which still exists, was one of the early hotels in Webster Springs.

from all over the eastern part of the United States flocked to these operations, "dead-heading" on log-
ging trains, walking, travelling as

whether it is necessary to con-
struct tourist facilities to attract
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The Rise And Fall Of A Tourist Center

(By Gordon T. Hamrick - Continued from Page 9.)

Funk of Elk. As the trains pulled in, the entire town went down to see *whether maybe what* was coming to town. Bus boys and porters cried out, "_____ Hotel! Carry your bags!" (Although there is the record of one rather short-tempered hotel manager who is reputed to have called, "_____ Hotel! Carry your own bags!")

Hotels, yes. Other tourist facilities, other than those offered by the Webster Springs Hotel, no. In a word, development of facilities did not keep pace with the tourist demand. True, there were a sizeable number of professional men located in town - notably doctors

owned it. Not only would they sell real estate they did not own; they would sell the same piece of property three or four times. Lawyers did a booming business in those days.)

Pedestrian traffic in Webster Springs in early days seems to have been something of a venture in daring. Main Street was paved from the vicinity of the Oakland Hotel to the Court House; around the river side of the Court Square and possibly as far as Union Street. Sidewalks are visible in the lower end of town; the street is of mud, and crossing was accomplished at the risk of being mired down. A

guests from the rest of the folks - separating the goats, so to speak, the boardwalk, known as Back Lane, ran up Back Street. In the rest of the rocks were set on end, et(s), between the wagon wheels, for pedestrians to cross, and woe be to the pedestrian who lost while crossing.

The early proprietors of Webster Springs to seem too busy separating from his money to additional facilities for ation.

The Tracy building skating rink (and a high school in the bowling alley was nter of town along th and the Klondike, wh took his girl for an ic was located in one of

Analysis Of Salt-Sulphur Water

COURT HOUSE WELL

(Addison McLaughlin Well)

Webster Springs, W. Va.

Of A Tourist Center

Continued from Page 9.)

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guests from the rest of the towns- folks - separating the sheep from the goats, so to speak. Another boardwalk, known as "Lover's Lane, ran up Back Fork in the general area of what is now Bell Street. In the rest of the town, rocks were set on end in the stre- et(s), between the ruts made by wagon wheels, for pedestrians to cross, and woe be to the poor pedestrian who lost his balance while crossing.

The early proprietors in Web- ster Springs to seem to have been too busy separating the tourist from his money to construct add- itional facilities for tourist recre- ation.

The Tracy building housed the skating rink (and als o the first high school in the county.) The bowling alley was near the cen- ter of town along the river bank, and the Klondike, where a fellow took his girl for an ice cream cone, was located in one of the buildings just up the street. Recreational facilities, other than these, seem to have been non-existent, except possibly for a pool hall.

Contrary to popular belief, it was not the frequent fires that ravaged Webster Springs that spel- led the death of tourism as an industry. By the time the Webster Springs Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1925, tourism was already dead as a dodo, having been done in by industrial development, notably lumbering. Tourism in Webster Springs had reached a zenith some- where about 1912 or 1913 and, from that date, had steadily fallen off. It was no coincidence that the decline in tourism was accompan- ied by the development of lumber-



The Oakland Hotel, which still exists, was one of the Webster Springs.

from all over the eastern part of the United States flocked to these operations, "dead-heading" on log- ging trains; walking, travelling as best they could. Every town was full of uncouth ruffians, often drunk, always belligerent. And, always, there was the ever-pre- sent prospect of open warfare be- tween the foreign railroad men - track crews - and the lumbermen, as can be attested by any news- paper of the period.

Add to these facts the destruc- tion of the game habitat caused by logging, the destruction of the clear trout streams caused by erosion, and the picture becomes more grim. And, along about this time, the American public had developed its love affair with the automobile, and "auto camping" was the rage. Auto roads were non-existent in Webster County; tourists shunned the County. At the time the Webster Springs Ho- tel burned in 1925, at the heart of the tourist season, it reputedly had a total of eight paying guests and, for some years, had been a

whether it is n struct tourist fa the tourist, or wh the tourist and lities to care for question; one is other. Without t no need for the the facilities, th be attracted to is required is a eration which ca ist gradually and provide for him. road will not, sufficient touris facilities are them; the facil profitless with road

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In the Webster Springs Hotel, which was supposedly

signant, they were a wandering group, following the logging camps, and working at each camp just long enough to build a stake to reach the next one. As a rule, the loggers were a hard-working group when at camp; outside of camp,

County were purchased by Pardoe & Curtin; the real estate was retained and the railroad rights were sold to the Western Maryland Rail- way. Passenger service from Centralia had been discontinued; Western Maryland Railway had

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As any old timer can relate, early loggers were a breed apart from other people. Fiercely independent, they were a wandering group, following the logging camps, and working at each camp just long enough to build a stake to reach the next operation. As a rule, the loggers were a hard-working group when in camp; outside of camp, they were a hard-drinking, profane and belligerent crew. Few tourists who had the misfortune to be on the same train with a crew of drunken lumbermen (or wookhicks) would care to repeat the experience. Even more to the point, the townspeople quickly learned that the loggers demanded less in the way of accommodations than did the tourists, and were, consequently, easier to separate from their money. The quality of hotel accommodations declined, and so did the number of tourists. The Oakland and Webster Springs hotels attempted to maintain standards, but it was a losing battle.

The headwaters of the Elk, Gauley, Mully, Williams, and Cranberry rivers were the last untouched virgin timber in the eastern United States. When the lumber interests, notably the Spruce Lumber Company (later the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company) and the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company, began operations, the death knell for tourism had sounded. The Spruce Lumber Company operations in Webster County began about 1913; the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company operations about 1907, with the Gauley River

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The Depression came along; Col. McGraw passed away and his estate went in liquidation. The real estate and railroad rights in Webster County were purchased by Pardee & Curtin; the real estate was retained and the railroad rights were sold to the Western Maryland Railway. Passenger service from Centralia had been discontinued; Western Maryland Railway had never offered passenger service. The track from Centralia was torn up for scrap and the rolling stock junked. The section of West Virginia Midland Railroad toward Bergoo was standardized and connected with the former Greenbrier, Cheat and Elk Railroad which ran up Elk River, to Elkins. The Back Fork section of the West Virginia Midland Railroad was torn up for scrap early during World War II.

Meantime, the early inferior earthen roads of the County had been replaced by, or were being replaced by, roads more suited to automobile travel; however, auto travel on any Webster County road was still something of an adventure, the roads being generally steep, narrow, and rough. The start of construction of State Route 20 in 1925 revived talk of Webster Springs becoming a tourist center. This talk continued intermittently throughout the Depression and culminated in the Rhododendron Festivals of 1938 through 1942. These Festivals were the dying gasp of attempts to reestablish a tourist industry. Apparently, the promoters had yet to learn the lesson of their predecessors; industrial development and tourism aren't com-

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The headwaters of the Elk, Gauley, Holly, Williams, and Cranberry rivers were the last untouched virgin timber in the eastern United States. When the lumber interests, notably the Spruce Lumber Company (later the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company) and the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company, began operations, the death knell for tourism had sounded. The Spruce Lumber Company operations in Webster County began about 1913; the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company operations about 1907, with the Gauley River section being opened about 1917. Loggers

Fork section of the West Virginia Midland Railroad was torn up for scrap early during World War II.

Meantime, the early inferior earthen roads of the County had been replaced by, or were being replaced by, roads more suited to automobile travel; however, auto travel on any Webster County road was still something of an adventure, the roads being generally steep, narrow, and rough. The start of construction of State Route 20 in 1925 revived talk of Webster Springs becoming a tourist center. This talk continued intermittently throughout the Depression and culminated in the Rhododendron Festivals of 1938 through 1942. These Festivals were the dying gasp of attempts to reestablish a tourist industry. Apparently, the promoters had yet to learn the lesson of their predecessors; industrial development and tourism aren't compatible. In this case, the "woodhicks" had been replaced by miners and nothing else had really changed.

Since the "crash" of coal mining during the late 1950's, there has been talk of Webster County becoming a tourist center. Various studies have cited all the attractions - the spectacular scenery, the rivers, the remote location. The same studies also cite the problems - lack of facilities, roads, and capital to construct modern facilities.

Much effort, time, and money, has been spent on the question of

It is said itself. Webster is a thriving area, is not unlike the area; tourist center; but not gained. Webster County will it be economic progress, lethargic, lost opportunity.



Co

When recorded Webster 1925, too in the area had only time.

ENTER 5 & 10

er Carpenter

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asked a native professional man lived in the area, "Well, in the winter, they live off the tourist trade. (It might be well to point out that the Webster House burned in 1896, its were destroyed by fireing real estate business, with certain sharp and willing to sell everyone any piece in the County, whether or not they

a gate at the upper end, supposedly to keep cows out. It probably served the more practical purpose of separating Webster Springs Hotel



Collection of Berlin Chapman

McGraw's Promenade provided a pleasant walkway for tourists journeying from the Webster Springs Hotel to the Salt Sulphur Well.

loggers were a hard-work when in camp; outside they were a hard-driven and belligerent crewists who had the misfortune on the same train with drunken lumbermen would care to repent. Even more the townspeople thought that the loggers in the way of accommodation did the tourists, and consequently, easier to their money. The accommodations decided the number of Oakland and Webster attempted to reach, but it was

The headwaters of the Gauley, Holly, and Williams rivers were touched virgin timber in the United States. Lumber interests, not the Lumber Company, Virginia Pulp and Paper Company, and the Cherry River Lumber Company, the death knell had sounded. The Company operation in the County began with the Cherry River Bo Company operation with the Gauley River being opened about

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Hotel's, there has
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on the question of

Will it be advancement and eco-
nomic prosperity or will it be a
lethargic slide down the road of
lost opportunity? It is up to you.



Collection of Grace Miller

When the camera of Stalnaker
recorded the destruction of the
Webster Springs Hotel on July 25,
1925, tourism was a dying industry
in the area. The hotel supposedly
had only eight paying guests at the
time.

... came along. Col. ... away and his estate ... The real es- ... rights in Webster ... purchased by Pardee ... the real estate was re- ... the railroad rights were ... Western Maryland Rail- ... passenger service from ... had been discontinued; ... Maryland Railway had ... passenger service. ... from Centralia was torn ... and the rolling stock ... a section of West Vir- ... and Railroad toward ... standardized and con- ... the former Greenbrier, ... Railroad which ran ... to Elkins. The Back ... of the West Virginia ... road was torn up for ... during World War II.

... the early inferior ... of the County had ... by, or were being ... roads more suited to ... travel, however, auto ... by Webster County road ... something of an advan- ... roads being generally ... now, and rough. The ... of State Route ... toward back of Webster ... coming a tourist center, ... continued intermittently ... the Depression and ... the Reconstruction Era ... 1938 through 1942. These ... were the dying gasp of ... to reestablish a tourist

Apparently, the ... and yet to learn the lesson ... rednecks, individual de- ... and tourism aren't com- ... In this case, the "wood- ... all been replaced by ... sections ... had really

rear of Berlin Anderson's home ... and on the former Denver Cogar ... property. The Salt Sulphur Well, ... as well as the famous mineral ... baths were located in the bottom, ... to the rear of the C & K Ford ... garage. A suspension bridge cro- ... ssed the river in back of the ... Hotel; traces of the suspension ... system are still visible. The ... riding stables were located in the ... Upper end of the bottom; the mini- ... ature gold course is now a part ... of the Marvin Court. The past is ... dead, but . . .

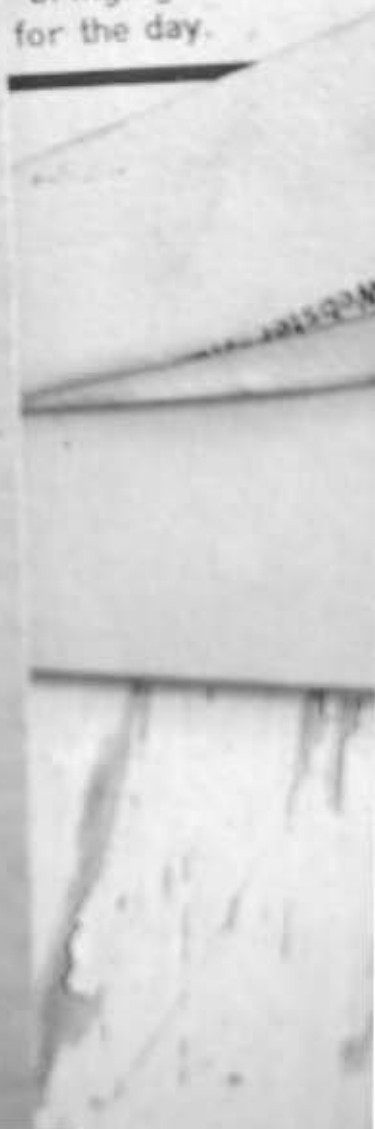
It is said that history repeats ... itself. Webster County once had ... a thriving tourist industry. Given ... adequate support, that industry can ... be revived. It is up to you.

It is said that history repeats ... itself. Webster County once had ... a thriving tourist industry, and it ... is not unreasonable to visualize ... the area once again becoming a ... tourist center. Risks there will ... be; but nothing ventured, nothing ... gained. The future of Webster ... County will soon be determined. ... Will it be advancement and eco- ... nomic prosperity or will it be a ... lethargic slide down the road of ... lost opportunity? It is up to you.



G. Leroy Crislip

... still haul loads of ... mill. Walk along one ... dioned grades and see ... eds of men worked to ... maintain the railroad ... quickly removed when ... over. Listen care- ... you can hear what ... dismiss as the wind ... rough the trees, but it ... possibly be a voice ... ist. Perhaps it's old ... bringing in the last ... for the day.





Oakland Hotel, which still exists, was one of the early hotels in
r Springs.

ll over the eastern part of
and States flocked to these
ons, "dead-heading" on log-
ams; walking, travelling as
ey could. Every town was
uncouth ruffians, often
always belligerent. And,
there was the ever-pre-
spect of open warfare be-
the foreign railroad men -
rows - and the lumbermen,
be afflicted by any news-
f the period.

to these facts the destruc-
the game habitat caused
ing, the destruction of the
moat streams caused by
and the picture becomes
rim. And, along about this
the American public had
of its love affair with the
ite, and "auto camping"
rage. Auto roads were
herd in Webster County;
shunned the County. At

whether it is necessary to con-
struct tourist facilities to attract
the tourist, or whether one attracts
the tourist and then builds faci-
lities to care for him. It is a moot
question; one is essential to the
other. Without the tourist, there is
no need for the facilities; without
the facilities, the tourist will not
be attracted to the locale. What
is required is a program of mod-
eration which can attract the tour-
ist gradually and, at the same time,
provide for him. The Scenic Rail-
road will not, in itself, attract
sufficient tourists unless adequate
facilities are available to serve
them; the facilities alone will be
profitless without the Scenic Rail-
road.

Those who want to live in the
past and talk of a "tourist industry"
should take a walk through Hotel



Leroy Crislip

